Pathways to Success Study Team

April 20, 2012 Meeting Minutes

9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.; CIT 3150

Present: M. Welford (Chair), T. Case, B. Cook, L. Gwinett, A. Hackney, C. Hodges, P. Humphreys, G. Shah, M. Smith, T. Teeter, and C. Griffith (Recorder)

Discussion

The committee reviewed the list of unresolved issues, adding a recommendation that advising on thesis and/or dissertation committees count toward an individual’s teaching load. There was also a discussion about limiting the number of lecturers by department, but it was noted that such a policy could create problems in departments such as Writing and Linguistics which relies on lecturers to deliver high quality first year writing courses. Limiting the number of temporary faculty positions would also reduce the ability of departments to respond to teaching needs. It was agreed that the committee would recommend, however, percentages for each pathway.

A draft preamble to the white paper was distributed which led to a discussion on the criteria used for promotion and tenure. The Provost has interpreted the promotion and tenure policy as follows: for promotion to associate professor and tenure, faculty are judged against the criteria in place at the time of the faculty member’s hire. For promotion to professor, the Provost has suggested that units may wish to set the criteria as that in place at the time the faculty member was promoted to associate professor. This committee could make that a recommendation.

In these cases, it was noted that criteria refers to the “minimum requirements to be considered for tenure and/or promotion.” Meeting these criteria does not guarantee tenure and/or promotion. Ideally, faculty would also demonstrate “value added” (i.e., what they bring to the department that makes it worthwhile to retain them as tenured colleagues).

The committee also discussed the pros and cons of a university level faculty review committee for promotion and tenure. Initially, the committee recommended that this faculty review committee serve in the following capacities:

- Advise the Provost, deans, and department chairs on issues related to promotion and tenure
- Review faculty appeals
- Assess the promotion and tenure process at all levels
  Assessment would be of the process (e.g., did the department apply its own criteria consistently and fairly?)

A question was raised regarding what the objection was to having this committee review all promotion and tenure dossiers at the university level. The main objection was the workload involved, but it was noted that the model used by NSF in panel reviews could be implemented. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that having a faculty review committee review all promotion and tenure dossiers was a more optimal solution than relying on the Council of Deans to conduct the university level review. At the University of South Carolina, promotion and tenure dossiers are reviewed at the department level, then by the dean, then by the Provost, and then by the Committee of 24. Both the Provost’s recommendations and those of the Committee of 24 are presented to the President for final decision. Under this model, 8 members of the Committee of 24 are appointed and 16 elected with representation from each college. Dossiers are assigned to 2-3 members based upon discipline. The Committee of 24 also approves the department and college criteria for promotion and tenure as well as holds workshops for those undergoing review. It was recommended that if we recommend such a model, that membership also be assigned based upon pathway.
Next Steps
Amy will revise the preamble of the white paper to reflect today’s discussion on criteria.

Pat will draft language regarding the Pathways’ recommendation of a university level faculty review committee for promotion and tenure.

Meeting adjourned 10:30 a.m.

Next Meeting: Friday, May 4th, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., CIT 3150
Second Open Faculty Forum, Friday, April 27th, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., CIT 1004